



July 1, 2026

# National Park Service: FY2027 Appropriations

The National Park Service (NPS) administers the National Park System, which includes 433 units valued for their natural, cultural, and recreational importance. System lands cover 81 million federal acres and 4 million nonfederal acres. As part of the Department of the Interior (DOI), NPS receives funding in annual appropriations laws for Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies. Selected issues for Congress related to NPS appropriations include the overall staffing levels supported by the appropriations, funding to address NPS deferred maintenance, allocations for land acquisition, and NPS assistance to nonfederal entities.

## FY2027 Appropriations

The Trump Administration requested \$2.206 billion in discretionary appropriations for NPS for FY2027. The request was 32% lower than NPS’s FY2026 discretionary appropriation of \$3.267 billion enacted in P.L. 119-74, Division C. The FY2027 request proposed decreases for four of NPS’s five discretionary accounts compared with FY2026 and elimination of one account (Table 1). NPS also receives mandatory appropriations from entrance and recreation fees, concessioner fees, donations, and the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF, 54 U.S.C. §§200301 et seq.), among other sources. NPS projected \$11.757 billion in mandatory appropriations for FY2027, compared with mandatory appropriations of \$1.768 billion for FY2026. The projected increase reflects a request by NPS for \$10 billion in mandatory funding to establish a Presidential Capital Stewardship Program for construction and beautification projects in and around Washington, DC. In addition to regular discretionary appropriations and mandatory appropriations, NPS also has received supplemental discretionary appropriations for disaster assistance in some recent years.

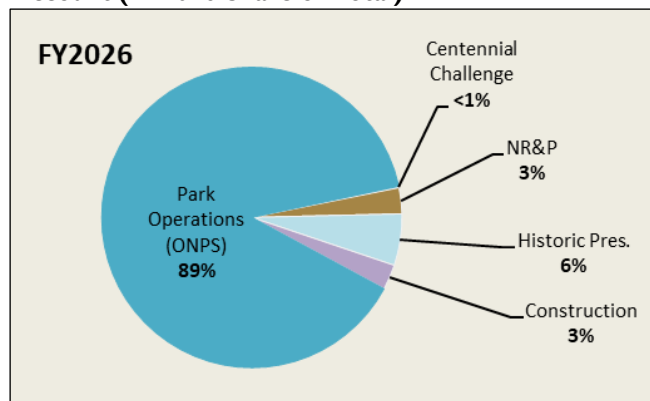
On June 5, 2026, the House Committee on Appropriations reported H.R. 9171 (H.Rept. 119-687), with \$3.225 billion in NPS discretionary appropriations for FY2027. This is 46% more than the Administration’s request and 1% less

than the FY2026 appropriation. Comparing with FY2026 at the account level, H.R. 9171 would decrease funding for two accounts, increase funding for two accounts, and provide level funding for one account (Table 1).

## NPS’s Appropriations Accounts

NPS has five discretionary appropriations accounts (Figure 1). The majority of NPS discretionary appropriations typically have gone to the *Operation of the National Park System* (ONPS) account to support day-to-day activities, programs, and services at park units. These include resource stewardship, visitor services, park protection, facility operations and maintenance, and administrative costs.

Figure 1. NPS’s Discretionary Appropriations by Account (FY2026 Share of Total)



Sources and Notes: See Table 1. ONPS = Operation of the National Park System. NR&P = National Recreation and Preservation. Totals do not sum to 100% due to rounding.

The *National Recreation and Preservation* (NR&P) account funds NPS programs that assist state, local, tribal, and private land managers with grants for outdoor recreation planning, natural and cultural resource preservation, and other activities. The largest single program funded through the account is NPS assistance to national heritage areas.

Table 1. NPS Discretionary Appropriations by Account (\$ in millions)

Account	FY2026 Enacted (P.L. 119-74)	FY2027 Request	% Change from FY2026	House Committee-Reported H.R. 9171	% Change from FY2026
Operation of the Nat’l. Park System	2,901.2 <sup>a</sup>	2,140.8	-26%	2,874.2	-1%
Nat’l. Recreation and Preservation	91.6	6.0	-93%	92.3	+1%
Historic Preservation Fund	181.1 <sup>a</sup>	11.0	-94%	163.7	-10%
Construction	88.5	48.7	-45%	90.1	+2%
Centennial Challenge	5.0	—	-100%	5.0	—
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,267.3</b>	<b>2,206.5</b>	<b>-32%</b>	<b>3,225.3</b>	<b>-1%</b>

Sources: House Appropriations Committee tables. Totals may not sum precisely due to rounding.

a. Amount reflects amendments to P.L. 119-74, Division C, as contained in P.L. 119-75, Division D, Section 426(d).

NPS administers historic preservation programs through its *Historic Preservation Fund* (HPF) account. Under the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. §§300101 et seq.), the HPF receives \$150 million annually from offshore energy revenues, but monies are available only as provided in appropriations acts. Congress has provided funding for formula grants to state and tribal historic preservation offices and for nationally competitive grant programs.

The *Construction* account covers repair, replacement, and improvement of existing facilities, new construction, and related activities and planning. In past years, the account has included line-item funding for individual construction projects, but NPS did not request (and Congress did not provide) line-item funding for FY2026, nor did the agency request line-item funding for FY2027.

The *Centennial Challenge* account supports the National Park Centennial Challenge Fund (54 U.S.C. §§103501 et seq.), which matches donations for projects or programs that further the NPS mission and visitor experience. The fund also receives offsetting collections from sales of federal recreation passes to seniors.

## Issues for Congress

### NPS Staffing Levels

NPS's full-time equivalent (FTE) staffing levels declined by 6% between FY2017 and FY2025. Based on FY2026 enacted appropriations, NPS estimated a 13% FTE decline in FY2026 compared to FY2025; this partly reflects the ongoing transfer of some NPS functions (e.g., human resources, wildland fire management) to centralized DOI entities. NPS's FY2027 request would support 13,119 FTE staff, an 18% reduction in FTE levels compared with FY2026 enacted levels. (FTEs supported by H.R. 9171 are unknown.) NPS's budget states an "urgent need to streamline staffing and utilize State, local, and private sector management to ensure the long-term health and sustainment of the National Park system."

During the FY2026 appropriations process, S.Rept. 119-46 stated a concern that national park operations and resource protection could be "deleteriously affected in an effort to make parks operate more efficiently." The joint explanatory statement for FY2026 Interior appropriations did not include this text, but contained a provision similar to that in S.Rept. 119-46 regarding regular NPS briefings to the appropriations committees on park operations, including staffing and visitor data by park. For FY2027, H.Rept. 119-687 "reminds the Service" of these "briefing requirements" and states the committee's expectation of compliance.

### Deferred Maintenance

NPS's backlog of deferred maintenance (DM), estimated by NPS at \$24.237 billion as of the end of FY2025, has been a focus in the appropriations process. Despite legislation and agency actions aimed at addressing the backlog, it has increased over the past decade, including a 59% increase between FY2020 and FY2021 that NPS attributed partly to changes in its methods for estimating DM. Congress has debated ways to address NPS DM, including the balance of discretionary and mandatory funding for this purpose, and has debated funding for preventive (e.g., cyclic and routine) maintenance that could help keep DM from accumulating.

In past years, two discretionary appropriations activities, Line-Item Construction and Maintenance (LICM) in the Construction account and Facility Operations and Maintenance (FOM) in the ONPS account, have been primary sources of discretionary funds for NPS preventive and deferred maintenance. For FY2026, P.L. 119-74 provided \$948.4 million for these two accounts combined; this included a 3% increase for FOM and a 96% reduction for LICM compared with FY2025. Appropriators stated that FY2026 LICM funding was reduced (and shifted to FOM) because NPS did not provide a list of proposed line-item projects for funding. The FY2027 budget also did not include such a list; it requested \$578.8 million for FOM and no funding for LICM. H.R. 9171 would provide \$782.6 million for FOM and no funding (as per the request) for LICM, for a total 17% reduction from FY2026.

For FY2021-FY2025, mandatory spending for NPS DM derived primarily from the National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund (LRF) established by the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA; P.L. 116-152). NPS received \$1.3 billion from the fund in each of these years to address "priority deferred maintenance projects." In the 119<sup>th</sup> Congress, S. 1547 and H.R. 9250 would reauthorize LRF funding, with specified changes. Separately, allocations from the Federal Lands Transportation Program support DM for NPS roads. Other mandatory funding sources, such as recreation fees, also have been used for NPS DM.

### Land Acquisition Funding

The GAOA shifted LWCF land acquisition funding from discretionary to mandatory spending. Allocations remain an issue in the appropriations process, as the GAOA requires agencies to submit LWCF program and project allocations in their budget justifications, and appropriations acts may specify alternate allocations. In FY2026, NPS received \$94.7 million for its own land acquisitions (not including state assistance grants and battlefield program grants). NPS requested \$109.3 million for its land acquisitions for FY2027. H.R. 9171 directs allocations as specified in H.Rept. 119-687, which match the requested amount.

### NPS Assistance to Nonfederal Sites and Programs

Some Members of Congress and other stakeholders have questioned whether NPS assistance to nonfederal sites and programs should be reduced, to better focus on the agency's "core" mission of managing national parks. In particular, some have encouraged national heritage areas, which are nonfederally managed, to develop plans for self-sufficiency, while Congress has increased heritage area funding over the past decade as new areas have been added. Two NPS discretionary accounts (NR&P and HPF) provide funding for nonfederal assistance. Combined, they represented less than 10% of total NPS funding in FY2026. For FY2027, H.R. 9171 would reduce combined funding for these two accounts by 6% from FY2026 levels, while the NPS request would reduce the combined funding by 94% (**Table 1**).

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